

4-29-2003

Concert: Ithaca College Symphony Orchestra & Chamber Orchestra

Ithaca College Symphony Orchestra

Ithaca College Chamber Orchestra

Jeffrey D. Grogan

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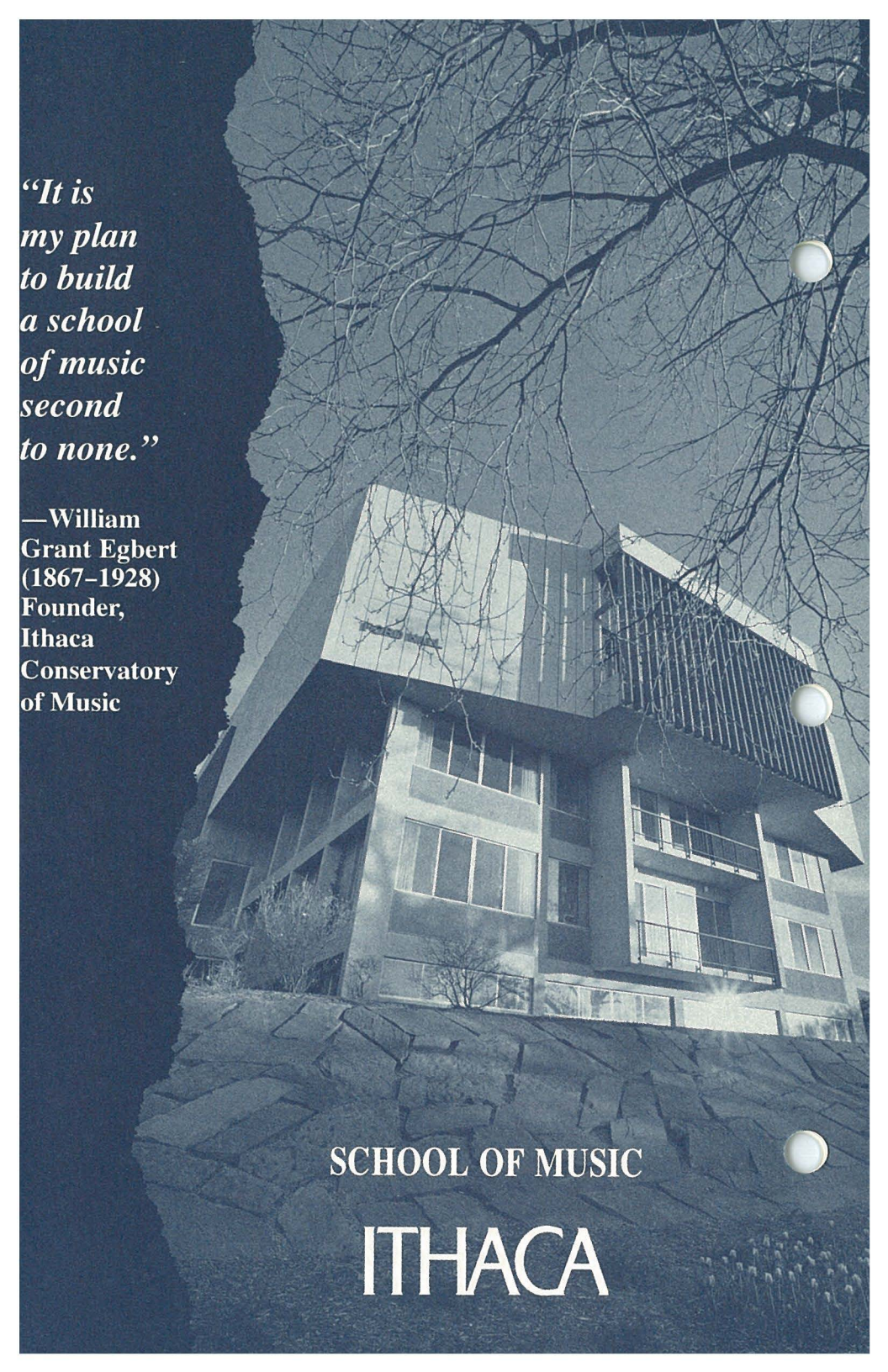


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*“It is
my plan
to build
a school
of music
second
to none.”*

—William
Grant Egbert
(1867–1928)
Founder,
Ithaca
Conservatory
of Music

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ITHACA

ITHACA COLLEGE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
ITHACA COLLEGE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Jeffrey D. Grogan, conductor

Piano Concerto No. 2 in g minor, Op. 22

Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835-1921)

I. *Andante Sostenuto*

Wei-Hsun Yuan, piano
Winner of 2002 High School Piano Competition

Appalachian Spring: Ballet for Martha

Aaron Copland
(1900-1990)

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

- I. *Allegro non troppo*
- II. *Adagio nontropo*
- III. *Allegretto grazioso (Quati Andantino)*
- IV. *Allegro con spirito*

Ford Auditorium
Tuesday, April 29, 2003
8:15 p.m.

Program Notes

Wei-Hsun Yuan

Winner of Ithaca College 2002 High School Piano Competition, Wei-Hsun Yuan, 17 years old, will be graduating as valedictorian of his senior class this year. He was accepted into Harvard University and will be attending there in the fall of 2003.

Wei-Hsun is a charismatic pianist in his own right. As First Prize winner of the Schenectady Symphony Orchestra's Annual Parillo Piano Competition, Wei-Hsun performed at the Schenectady Library's McChesney Room. He was also the Winner of the New York State Music Teachers Association's Killian Piano Competition, and was invited to perform at the NYSMTA State Convention in Rochester. In addition, Wei-Hsun placed first in the Rensselaer Music Scholarship Competition. This competition was open to all instrumentalists from the Capital District.

In the fall of 2002, Wei-Hsun won a series of Competitions, beginning with the New York State Capital Region Frederic Chopin Piano Competition. In honor of his award, he performed in the Polish Fest Winner's Recital. Later in the fall, Wei-Hsun traveled to Ithaca College to compete in both the Solo and the Concerto Competitions. He placed first in the Concerto Competition and second in the Division I Solo Competition. As winner of the Concerto Competition, he was invited to perform with the Ithaca College Symphony Orchestra this evening. Wei-Hsun is also engaged to perform with the Schenectady Symphony Orchestra in 2004.

Wei-Hsun Yuan's earliest lessons were with Elena Berlinsky. He then studied under Feroza LaBonne for several years until she left the area in the fall of 2001. In the Fall of 2002 until the Fall of 2003, he studied with Dr. Young Kim. He is currently a student of Helena Westerman.

Wei-Hsun attended the highly selective Aspen Music School and Festival on full scholarship during the summers of 2001 and 2002. He has appeared numerous times on the Schenectady Public Access Program through his solo and group recitals. Wei-Hsun is the son of Hong-Hsee and Mia Yuan.

Piano Concerto No. 2 in g minor, Op. 22

There are some works of art that need time to cultivate and develop in the artist's mind, while others fly in on wings of inspiration and in a matter of moments pour out in ink on paper. It was this latter scenario that Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) experienced as he wrote his second Piano Concerto. In the early part of 1868 he and the well known pianist Anton Rubinstein were just finishing up a concert series including a cycle of eight piano concertos. After the event Rubinstein suggested that they collaborate again, but this time with Saint-Saëns at the keyboard and Rubinstein conducting. It was three weeks before a new venue could be secured, so in the intervening 17 days Saint-Saëns decided to write a new concerto for the occasion. Since he spent most of the time composing it and much less of his time practicing, the initial performance was a bit shy of a great success. None-the-less, it has become the most popular and widely performed of his five piano concertos.

Appalachian Spring

Music's innate ability to evoke motion in one's mind, to create and manipulate aural space, and to draw from our experience sights, sounds, and scents is exemplified in Aaron Copland's (1900-1990) *Appalachian Spring* (1943-44). Set in the Appalachian Mountains, the program of the ballet is described by Copland in the following manner:

The bride-to-be and the young farmer-husband enact the emotions, joyful and apprehensive, which their new domestic partnership invites. An old neighbor suggests, now and then, the rocky confidence of experience. A revivalist and his followers remind the new householders of the strange and terrible aspects of human fate. At the end the couple are left quiet and strong in their new house.

The initial open transparent textures of the strings and clarinet easily transport the mind's eye to a yet misty dawn, silhouetting midnight pines against the white radiance of an ever-waking sky. Copland's expression of unabashed joy that follows this pristine opening is infectious in its evocation of springtime's affirmation of life. He had a natural ability to create fresh melodies that retained the simplicity and wholesomeness found in our American folk heritage. Indeed all of the themes heard in *Appalachian Spring* are of his own composition with the exception of the finale, "Simple Gifts," written by Joseph Brackett in 1848 and published in a volume of Shaker melodies

compiled by Edward D. Andrews. Orchestrated with brilliance and finesse, the tune culminates the work with an inevitable sense of strength and peace. The text of the first stanza begins:

'Tis the gift to be simple,
'Tis the gift to be free,
'Tis the gift to come down
Where we ought to be...

Appalachian Spring was premiered in Washington D.C. on October 30, 1944 with the original scoring for 13 instruments. Just a year after the premiere Copland revised the instrumentation to accommodate a full orchestra while eliminating 10 minutes of music and effecting a dramatic orchestral suite. When Copland was asked by the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation to write the ballet for Martha Graham's dance company, he took into consideration his friend's personal characteristics.

I was thinking primarily about Martha and her unique choreographic style, which I knew well. There's something prim and restrained, simple yet strong, about her which one tends to think of as American. *Appalachian Spring*, for which Graham chose the title, would never have existed without her special personality. The music reflects, I hope, the unique quality of a human being, and American landscape and a way of feeling.

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) began work on his First Symphony in 1862 after which he spent the next fourteen years revising and editing the work while honing his skills in symphonic writing. When the piece was completed in 1876 his joy over its success set him to writing another symphony immediately. The refinement and organic continuity found in his Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73, is a direct result of this rigorous study and self-criticism. Written during the summer of 1877 in Pörschach on Lake Wörth in southern Austria, the Second Symphony was premiered on December 30th of the same year with the Vienna Philharmonic and Hans Richter conducting. It is often referred to as his "Pastorale" Symphony reflecting Brahms' own assertion that the work was a reaction to the beautiful countryside surrounding his summer retreat.

A diligent student of early music and counterpoint, Brahms is noted for his particular attention to form and craft. His ability to manipulate a small motif to create contrast in melody and texture but maintain thematic unity throughout an entire work served him seminally in his Second Symphony. The effect of this fundamental unity is subtly marvelous in its way of evoking immediate familiarity with a new idea on an almost subconscious level.

The key to unlocking the magic of the Second Symphony is found in the opening four-note gesture of the low strings. Seeming to be merely a precursor to the first theme, as introduced by the horns and woodwinds, it actually functions as the germinal motif for the entirety of the symphony.

This motif contains two prominent characteristics, one melodic and one rhythmic, on which Brahms tirelessly and innovatively expounds. The melodic shape of the first three notes, D-C#-D, is much like a pliable branch, giving gently under pressure and then returning to its former state. This motion is mirrored immediately in the melodic line of the woodwinds, bending upward in inversion. Brahms exaggerates the gesture, pushing the middle note farther and farther away from the initial pitch, creating octave leaps in the delicately cascading melody of the violins.

Rhythmically, the theme introduces a hemiola, a rhythmic device that implies a duple pulse over triple meter, as the four-note motif, D-C#-D-A, encourages the listener to group the notes in pairs, D-C# and D-A. This device, as with the last, is developed further in the descending violin line.

Throughout the work these two elements are constantly at play. Disguised rhythmically in the second and third movements, they come to the forefront again at the opening of the fourth. The gliding violin melody with its deep bends and duple feel is incredible evocative of their first entrance in the first movement.

The constant recurrence and transformation of these romantic gestures creates a natural connection between each movement, each section and each phrase. It is Brahms' mastery of these compositional elements that allows the listener to be unknowingly passed from one musical thought to the next with inevitable sureness.

ITHACA COLLEGE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Jeffrey Grogan, conductor

Cayenna Ponchione, graduate conductor

Violin I

Laura Centonze
Annie Chen
Jennifer Colgan
Kiersten Cunningham
Dan Demetriou
Teresa Fiorenza
Neil Fronheiser
Beth Ann LaBella
Julianna Methven*
Jennifer O'Donnell
Maureen Pohlman
Dan Sender
Jacquelyn Sica
Dan Valente

Violin II

Elizabeth Cary
Katie Cavallaro
Lauren Dalrymple
Randi Filipo
Tamara Freida
Sarah Geiger
Amanda Gillespie*
William Hurley
Sonya Harper
Amanda Hockenberger
Lindsey Leone
Christian Simmelink
Jennifer Stepien
Alyson Whelan

Viola

Kate Cannizzaro
Jillian Fisher
Jaime Gould
Nina Missildine
Sayer Palmer
Jenna Pelkey

Joseph Prusch

Laura Raposo
Dana Rokosny*
Cassandra Stephenson
Loftan Sullivan
Annabelle Terbetski

Cello

Erin Bowers
Alana Chown
Laura Fitzsimmons
Alan Gallegos
Diana Geiger
Meredith Gollmer*
Leslie Lyons
Emily McBride
Elizabeth Meszaros
Kelly Nixon
Katherine Paul
Rebecca Stenborg
Christina Stripling

Bass

Jarred Eddy
Gregg Gianotti
Katherine Grasmeyer
Brian Krauss*
Josef Lorenz
Audrey Miller
John-Paul Norpoth
Patrick O'Connell
Ryan Reardon

Flute

Tamara Nelson*
Elaine Olchesky

*indicates
principal player

Oboe

Alex Hughes
Aaron Jakubiec
Devon Young

Clarinet

Byron Ford*
Diana Hall

Bassoon

Amanda Ginovsky*
Rebecca Hammontree

Horn

Katie Curran
Kira Kamensky
Carlie Kilgore
Joshua Phillips*
Kim Santora

Trumpet

Tim Harkcom
Andrew Hoesl*

Trombone

Matthew Haines
Scott Hoffman*

Bass Trombone

Eric Swanger

Tuba

Christian Carichner

Timpani

Annina Collier

Harp

Myra Kovary,
guest artist

Personnel listed in alphabetical order to emphasize each member's personal contribution.

ITHACA COLLEGE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Jeffrey Grogan, conductor

Cayenna Ponchione, graduate conductor

Violin I

Kiersten Cunningham
Neil Fronheiser
Amanda Gillespie*
Amanda Hockenberger
Julianna Methven
Jackie Sica

Violin II

Laura Centonze
Teresa Fiorenza
Tamara Frieda
William Hurley*
Maureen Pohlman
Dan Sender

Viola

Suzanne Miller
Dana Rokosny*
Laura Raposo
Cassandra Stephenson

Cello

Meredith Gollmer*
Leslie Lyons
Kelly Nixon
Christina Stripling

Bass

Brian Krauss*
John-Paul Norpoth

Flute

Leslie Kubica*
Kim Kather

Oboe

Aaron Jakubiec
Jamie Strefeler*

Clarinet

Eric Callahan
Byron Ford*

Bassoon

Amanda Ginovsky*
Jessica Shore

Horn

Joshua Phillips
Jeffrey Rubin*

Trumpet

Andrew Hoesl*
Christopher Yee

Trombone

Robert Bruns
Tim Smith*

Timpani

Mary Gardner

Percussion

Nick Galante
Taryn Lott

Harp

Myra Kovary,
guest artist

Piano

Joseph Pepper

*indicates
principal player

Personnel listed in alphabetical order to emphasize
each member's personal contribution.